Uniform Entertainment Tax

†3338. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a meeting of the Ministers of Information and Broadcasting of the Centre and the States is going to be held in Delhi on 17-18 April, 2005, in which apart from other matters discussion would be held on levying uniform entertainment tax; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) Entertainment Tax is a State subject and the rates vary from State to State.

25th State Information Ministers' Conference (SIMCON), which was held in New Delhi on 15-16 April 2005, *inter alia,* discussed the need for rationalization of entertainment tax rates in States. While the rationalization of entertainment tax has been carried out in several States, there was consensus on the need to further bring down the ceiling on entertainment tax levels to 25-30%. The progressive reduction in entertainment tax will provide a major fillip to the entertainment industry and help the industry to realize its full potential.

AIR Stations in Orissa

3339. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Radio (AIR) stations in Orissa are technically ready for commissioning for the last three years and awaiting clearance from Government;

(b) whether it is also a fact that non-commissioning of the AIR stations has caused blockage of capital assets of large value; and

(c) whether the commissioning has been held up due non sanction of the required staff to run them on a day-to-day basis?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) AIR Soro in Orissa is technically ready since

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

2001-02 for commissioning. There are a number of AIR projects, spread over in other parts of the country, which could not be commissioned for want of adequate manpower. While in some cases, commissioning has been resorted to through temporary readjustment, this has not been found feasible as a permanent measure. Efforts are made for expediting sanction of adequate staff.

Channel in United Kingdom

3340. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Prasar Bharati is likely to launch channel in United Kingdom;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have earmarked any funds for the channel?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has proposed to broadcast DD News Channel to the U.K. audience through a DTH (B sky B) platform. The proposal is yet to be approved by the competent authority.

Pending court cases in Punjab

3341. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of cases, pertaining to Punjab, are pending for disposal in the Punjab and Haryana High Courts and other civil/criminal cases in courts of the State;

(b) if so, the number of such cases which are pending for more than 10 years, 15 years and 20 years; and

(c) the steps taken for their early disposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) and (b) In the Punjab and Haryana High Court, 66553 cases are pending for more than 5 years but less than 10 years, 54396 cases are pending for more than 10 years but less than 20 years and 1942 cases are pending for more than 20 years. The total number